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CHARTER

18 June 1985

STAT

MEMORANDUM FOR: [redacted]
Chairman, Science and Technology Advisory Panel

FROM: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: STAP Working Group on Technological Surprise

1. As you know, I believe that one of the critical responsibilities of the Intelligence Community is to ensure that the US is not the victim of foreign technological surprise. This is not an easy task. The sheer breadth of science, the complexities of technology, the pace of modern progress, and the simple fact that new discoveries will always be made all pose obstacles in the path of our understanding. The difficulty of the problem is further compounded by the secretive nature of those nations who would use scientific and technological advances to work against our interests.

2. Because of the magnitude of the task, I believe it is necessary to ensure that the Community does not overlook any source of insight. To that end, I request that the Science and Technology Advisory Panel (STAP) establish a Working Group to add to our efforts to seek out and understand scientific and technological developments that could be used to advantage by foreign powers.

3. The nature of the problem precludes a narrowly defined set of tasks. The Working Group's role should be to offer advice and observations that will enhance the work of those pursuing answers from within the Community. It should function as a means of shedding light not only on potential advances on the far edge of science and technology, but also on innovative applications of existing technology. Its focus should be on the question: What kind of science and technology is happening in the world, especially in the Soviet Union, that the Intelligence Community should be aware of? The Working Group should provide advice on methods and areas for inquiry. It should not provide analysis itself, but rather point the way for analysts to go.

4. One way of beginning would be to review those national estimates that have been written with the appraisal of foreign scientific and technological prospects as an organizing principle. An appreciation of the record on technological surprise, as well as of the Community's endeavors to avert it, seems to me to be a necessary condition for the Working Group's efforts.

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5. In carrying out its charge, the Working Group should use [redacted] STAT
[redacted] Director of the Office of Scientific and Weapons Research STAT
(OSWR), as its point of contact in CIA, and Dr. Julian Nall, the National Intelligence Officer for Science and Technology (NIO/S&T) as its point of contact in the Community.

6. The kind of role I have sketched for the Working Group does not lend itself to a single, structured report. Rather, what I envision is a continuing set of briefings, papers, consultations, and other such advisory opinions rendered to [redacted] Dr. Nall, as appropriate. I STAT
should like, in addition, to see a written report in a year's time, or sooner if feasible. This report should summarize the Working Group's findings and highlight significant implications.

William J. Casey

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